

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING A MEDIA AUDITOR

KreaKom's members are aware that some clients might in certain cases have a legitimate wish to get an assessment of how their media spend is used in order thus to check the output and the effectiveness of their media investments. At the same time, it is a fact that an audit can be a particularly resource-intensive and time-consuming task. Therefore, it is important to create a reasonable balance of interests between the client's access to checking its media buying performance and the agency's protection of business secrets.

In cases where the client and media agency agree on access for a media auditor, Kreativitet & Kommunikation recommends that the below criteria be observed with a view to ensuring optimum collaboration between agency, client and auditor.

PROFESSIONALISM AND REPUTATION

The auditor must have a high integrity, expertise and reputation as well as sector-specific experience.

This means that:

- a. The auditor applies a transparent, uniform and professionally proper method to measure the client's campaigns.
- b. The auditor has a professional and carefully prepared auditing process.
- c. The auditor has qualified media experts who are capable of conducting professional discussions on a relevant professional level.
- d. If the client buys media on several markets through a media agency or an international media agency group, the auditor must operate across the same markets according to the same method and process as in the countries where the client does its media buying.

OBJECTIVE AND INDEPENDENT

The auditor must be an objective and independent party.

This means that:

- a. The auditor itself may not perform services that are wholly or partly in competition with the media agencies' services for the client or anyone else.
- b. The auditor may not itself or through any subsidiary or associated company have any business connections with any media owner or advertising media agency or agency holding company.
- c. Any other business relationship between the auditor and agencies or media companies, such as consulting or other assignments constituting a potential source of conflict of interest must be disclosed in writing to the management of the agency.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSURE OF DATA

The auditor must observe confidentiality and may not disclose any information about the media agency to any third party without the consent of the agency.

This means that:

- a. It is recommended that a non-disclosure agreement be signed between all three parties; the auditor, the client and the agency, before the media audit is commenced.
- b. The auditor must ensure that any data pools or databases used in the course of delivering its services are of an adequate size to protect the absolute confidentiality of each individual client's data.
- c. The auditor's examinations should to a reasonable extent be based on test samples.
- d. The data collection should take place in a reasonable way, enabling automatic transmission from the agency to the auditor's software solution without unnecessary costs. If this is not possible, the auditor itself should handle the registration of the data collected.
- e. The auditor may not disclose any information about the media agency's activities or other market data, analysis results or analysis methods specific to the agency to any third party without the prior consent of the agency.

AUDIT CONDITIONS

The audit must be carried out in compliance with the conditions set out in the agreement with the client.

This means that:

- a. The parties should sign an audit agreement, containing as a minimum the object, scope, contents, period and reporting requirements. Furthermore, a process description should be prepared.
- b. The agency should be notified well in advance of the media audit. If the agreement does not include any provisions regarding an audit, the general rule is that the client is not entitled to an audit.
- f. The auditor's work will be performed in compliance with the WFA Guide for Choosing and Using a Media Auditor, see Appendix. In case of inconsistencies, these criteria take precedence.

SUPPLEMENTARY HIGHLIGHTED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE WFA GUIDE ON CHOOSING AND USING A MEDIA AUDIT

The full content of the WFA (World Federation of Advertisers) guide can be found on KreaKom.dk

Confidentiality

3.1 It is the responsibility of the media auditor always to ensure the absolute confidentiality of every client's individual data and other information. This applies before and during the audit, as well as following its completion.

3.7 When the auditor provides its service for more than one country, using a network of local partner entities (fully owned or affiliate), all the considerations about confidentiality apply to each and every entity. Each of them should underwrite non-disclosure agreements (see above § 3.4)[comments: the content of § 3.4 corresponds to § 3.a. in Kreativitet & Kommunikation's criteria].

Transparency and best practice

4.1 The media auditor should clearly identify in all reports all data used in the delivery of its services.

4.5 Ensuring that all the relevant audit results and analyses, describing an agency's performance, are visible to that agency can help make the process more transparent. It is recommended practice, at the client's exclusive discretion and initiative, to share these analyses with the media agency.

4.8 Media auditors should under no circumstances seek or call for media buying economies which would be to the detriment of the effectiveness of the media plan, or in conflict with the brief or agreed guidelines. In the latter situation, they may recommend to the client to modify the brief and/or the guidelines.

Professionalism

5.1 The media auditor should provide to the client full CVs of all relevant personnel working on the business, in order to demonstrate the qualifications, experience, ability and in-depth craft skills necessary to the media auditing process. This experience should be appropriate for each market and country in which services are offered.

Remuneration and data ownership

6.1 It is strongly recommended that the media auditor's remuneration is independent of the client's delivered and assessed media buying performance.